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with bread which he afterwards ate, such was the general mistrust and fear of poisoning. The talisman was long used at table: it was laid beneath glass or plate.

In the 15th century, Vienna cooking was considered to be among the best in Europe, and when the Viennese went to war, he took his best cooks to camp with him. The doughty Capuchin monk Abraham a Santa Clara more than once flew into a passion over Viennese gormandizing. He was not surprised, he said in one of his sermons, that house and farm were so often ruined because of the owner's overeating and that the noble soul was suppressed by the fat paunch.

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DAYS OF SPLENDOUR. Splendour and luxury reached their climax in Austria in Leopoldian times, under Karl VI, under Prince Eugene and during the days of the Vienna Congress. Table decoration was a special feature of every official banquet. Fantastic shapes in sugar-icing, arabesques, ornamentation and groups of merry figures were the fashion in the days of great court banquets. The arrangement of the dishes competed with the table decorations; roasted doves and chickens, for instance, would be grouped about a pelican made of baked bread.

In this decorative period, they went so far as to produce gilded sucking-pigs. Astonishing pastry ships were filled with fruits of marzipan: the latter are still popular today. At other times table fireworks competed with disguised foods and artistic creations such as statues, fountains and castles of edible materials. Many confectioners of the period were trained sculptors.

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The most luxurious days for the city were those of the Vienna Congress. Entertainment at the Imperial Court cost 50,000 gulden a day. The wealthy Austrian aristocratic families gave banquets to as many as 700 guests at a time, one day in the week being reserved for such brilliant affairs.

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The so-called table d'hôte was never a success in Vienna. To these "Landlords tables" a certain number of people came at a fixed hour in order to partake of a meal which was served to everyone simultaneously at a fixed price. He who could eat quickest with the smallest regard for others was at an advantage, but as the Viennese dislike haste at mealtimes, the tables d'hôte were little patronised.

Apart from the customary eating-houses, there were also what were called the "traiteurs". Here one could eat at any time between eleven a. m. and three p. m., lunch costing up to a gulden according to what was chosen. The customers were drawn from a wide range of social classes. The manager stood in the middle of the room like a major commanding his troops and gave his orders to the waiters. The eaters sat packed together like sardines, gulped down their food and were quickly replaced by others.

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In biedermeier times the middle classes lived most of their lives at home in the bosom of the family, where they also entertained guests, and took little interest in appearing in public. For this reason their history is bound up with family tradition. Their way of life and customs inspired an art style which embodied and preserved

565 them. Although the Viennese woman, superficially regarded, may have achieved
573 the emancipation of the self-supporting woman later than those of other countries,
she early became the unchallenged and particularly respected representative of a well-defined and charming type of culture in the family, the home and in her salon. The average middle-class woman in Vienna has always lavished her imagination, her good taste, her emotions and her love on the home and its cultured atmosphere.
264 The famous Viennese "Gemütlichkeit" (comfort) is eternally to her credit. This was not difficult for her to achieve in the days of plenty, but she has the art of lending the poetic touch to the simplest meal. A snow-white tablecloth, a tasteful vase with flowers, an old china service, the dainty mat for a wine bottle and a touch of greenery as decoration can make the plainest meal attractive. Or the cobwebby teacloth of the Vienna Jause (tea table) with the hand-painted biedermeier cups, the charmingly arranged flowers, the sugary white and crisp "Guglhupf" (a sort of sponge-cake) in the centre and the aromatic coffee combine to bring a welcome break in the daily round.

265 This is also the reason why the restaurants in Vienna are less frequented than in other big cities. The stranger who remains more than a week in Vienna looks for private lodgings. If he is a man of name and position he soon finds acquaintances and free board. It was the custom when making a longer stay for a visitor to rent a room for the month and to eat only in restaurants.

511 In Vienna everything was cheaper than in most other cities. Karl Julius Weber wrote:—"Where is the great city where a philosopher may live so pleasantly for such a small sum of money and a man of the world can enjoy the fashionable world for an expenditure of 3,000 to 4,000 gulden? In any case one can live in Vienna twice as well as elsewhere with half as much money."

565 Glasbrenner writes with enthusiasm of Vienna:—"The Viennese is above all
181 a human being. In Vienna there is hardly a trace of class-consciousness, for in the same tavern lackeys and cab drivers sit next to artists, rich citizens and merchants,